

motion. President Trump reacted with anger and disgust, as he should have, when Syria's President Assad used chlorine gas against his own people. He should react the same way toward anti-personnel landmines and set an example for the rest of the world.

I ask unanimous consent that a January 6, 2018, New York Times editorial on this subject be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the New York Times, Jan. 6, 2018]

WHY DO LAND MINES STILL KILL SO MANY?

(By the Editorial Board)

The world is rolling backward, and at a disturbingly faster pace, in the struggle to limit carnage from land mines and other booby-trap explosives. The most recent numbers, covering 2016, are appalling.

Known casualties that year came to 8,605, including 2,089 deaths, according to a new report by Landmine Monitor, a research arm of the International Campaign to Ban Landmines. The toll was nearly 25 percent higher than the 6,967 maimed and dead counted a year earlier, and more than double the 3,993 in 2014. And these numbers are almost assuredly an undercount. "In some states and areas, numerous casualties go unrecorded," Landmine Monitor said.

Much of the 2016 mayhem stemmed from conflicts in Afghanistan, Libya, Ukraine and Yemen, but people in 56 countries and other areas were killed or wounded by improvised explosive devices and other ordnance placed by governments or, more commonly, by insurgent groups. The sheer indecency of it is self-evident. Nearly 80 percent of the victims were civilians; children accounted for 42 percent of civilian casualties in situations where the ages were known.

One subset of the menace, cluster munitions, is singularly vicious. A single cluster bomb can contain dozens, even hundreds, of baseball-size bomblets that spray in all directions, ripping apart anything in their path. All too often, they fail to detonate right away and thus become time bombs that imperil unwary civilians who pick them up, including curious children. Cluster munitions alone caused 971 known casualties in 2016, more than twice the toll of the previous year, according to Cluster Munition Monitor. Most victims were Syrians, nearly all of them civilians, but Saudi Arabia has also used American-supplied cluster bombs in Yemen.

Perhaps the saddest part of all this is that for well over a decade the world seemed to have gotten a grip on what are referred to generically as the "explosive remnants of war." Thanks to an international treaty that came into force in 1999—now signed by 163 countries and banning the production, stockpiling and transfer of land mines—casualties declined steadily worldwide. They reached a low of 3,450 in 2013, compared with 9,228 in 1999. (A companion treaty outlawing cluster munitions, joined by 119 countries, went into effect in 2010.) As the death and injury toll for 2016 shows, nearly all that hard-won progress has been erased by the brutal conflicts of recent vintage.

The picture is not irredeemably bleak. The Landmine Monitor said that 32 donors, led by the United States, contributed nearly \$480 million in 2016 for mine clearance and victim aid. That was an increase of 22 percent from the year before. More than 232,000 anti-personnel mines were reportedly destroyed in 2016, and about 66 square miles—an area nearly the size of Brooklyn—were cleared of explosive hazards.

The grim reality, though, is that the land mine and cluster munitions treaties are undercut by the refusal of some of modern warfare's most powerful players to sign them. Among those countries are China, Iran, Israel, North Korea, Russia and Saudi Arabia. And the United States. The Pentagon has long insisted that eliminating cluster bombs could put soldiers at risk. As for land mines, they are deemed by Washington to be a useful tool in the demilitarized zone separating North and South Korea—a first-line defense for the South against a possible invasion. But given the North's nuclear buildup, a mined DMZ seems to be a Cold War vestige of diminished value.

Washington is not immune to international suasion. Land mines are so stigmatized that American forces have barely used them since the 1991 Persian Gulf war. The United States stockpile, estimated at three million mines, is significantly reduced from pre-treaty years; it's puny compared with the 26 million mines that Russia has on hand, according to the International Campaign to Ban Landmines. Similarly, American reliance on cluster munitions, which peaked in the early stages of the 2003 Iraq war, has all but disappeared.

In 2014 the Obama administration even signaled it might be willing to join the anti-mine treaty. Regrettably, that step never came. It might have been a moral statement encouraging others to follow suit. Now, with President Trump openly disdainful of international agreements, the likelihood of Washington's signing the treaty would seem to be about zero. The Pentagon, under his ultimate control, recently authorized the military to restock older cluster munitions, whose immediate failure rate can be high, leaving bomblets that can explode and kill civilians even years later.

For countries like Afghanistan, Libya, Ukraine and Yemen, the risks may endure long after the guns go silent. Vietnam provides an example. Since the war there ended in 1975, at least 40,000 Vietnamese are believed to have been killed and another 60,000 wounded by American land mines, artillery shells, cluster bombs and other ordnance that failed to detonate back then. They later exploded when handled by scrap-metal scavengers and unsuspecting children.

The lesson is stark for today's war-torn countries. They could reap the same whirlwind in coming decades.

(At the request of Mr. SCHUMER, the following statement was ordered to be printed in the RECORD.)

VOTE EXPLANATION

• Mr. BOOKER. Mr. President, I was necessarily absent for the votes on the confirmation of Executive Calendar No. 371 and the motion to invoke cloture on Executive Calendar No. 389.

On vote No. 5, had I been present, I would have voted yea on the confirmation of Executive Calendar No. 371.

On vote No. 6, had I been present, I would have voted yea on the motion to invoke cloture on Executive Calendar No. 389. •

REMEMBERING ANNE MICHELE IRBY

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, today, with sadness in my heart, I wish to pay tribute to a very special person, Anne Michele Irby, a member of my staff for over 25 years and a dear friend who died on December 18, 2017.

Anne was born in Baltimore and raised in Parkville. She was the daughter of Basil T. Irby, a sales representative for the Baltimore Stationery Co., and Jean Craig, a homemaker. She attended St. Thomas More School and was a 1979 graduate of the old Seton High School in Charles Village. She received a diploma from what was then Villa Julie College and earned a bachelor's degree from the University of Baltimore. Early in her career, she worked for the Baltimore Jewish Council and then became a lobbyist for Associated Catholic Charities of Baltimore.

Anne joined my office in 1990 when I was a Member of the U.S. House of Representatives and remained a member of my team when I became a U.S. Senator. She was a dedicated case-worker in my Baltimore office and was an invaluable resource to my staff and the citizens of Maryland. She was an indefatigable advocate for veterans and their families and helped them navigate a complicated system to obtain disability, medical, and educational benefits. She also helped veterans obtain much-needed medical appointments and lost medals. In addition to her work with veterans, she also worked tirelessly to help Marylanders save their homes as the foreclosure crisis spread across the State during the recession.

Anne was very knowledgeable about the agencies and personnel available to serve the needs of my constituents. Agency professionals knew Anne and respected her willingness to assist those constituents in need. Anne considered her position in my office as a career, not just "a job." She was a true professional who wanted to make life better for as many people as she could. That is the essence of public service.

Anne would be best described as a "gentle soul." She was a devoted caregiver to her parents and close family members. She was a huge football fan. I think the only person she ever had a "beef" with was John Elway. The Baltimore Colts drafted him in 1983, but he refused to play for the Colts, so they had to trade him to Denver. Even though she was from Baltimore, she later cheered hard for the team from Washington after the Colts left town under the cover of darkness on March 29, 1984. She spent many Mondays talking about how her team fared on Sunday. In addition to her love of football, Anne enjoyed a good book and a hot cup of coffee. She would often visit Washington's Politics and Prose bookstore to pick up the latest bestseller or meet her favorite author. She frequented Baltimore's Woodlea Bakery and was known for bringing their donuts and cakes to the office for the rest of the staff and visitors.

Ralph Waldo Emerson said, "To laugh often and much; To win the respect of intelligent people and the affection of children; To earn the appreciation of honest critics and endure the betrayal of false friends; To appreciate

beauty, to find the best in others; To leave the world a bit better, whether by a healthy child, a garden patch, or a redeemed social condition; To know even one life has breathed easier because you have lived. This is to have succeeded."

Anne Irby left us much too soon, but she succeeded. She touched so many lives and helped so many people and families across the State. She will be remembered for putting the concerns of others before her own. Many people wake up every day hoping to make a difference. We can all take comfort in knowing that Anne Irby actually did make a difference. I send my deepest condolences to her sister Donna Jean Rodgers, her other family members, and her friends. We are all grieving.

I salute Anne for a job extraordinarily well done and pledge today that she will always be a member of "Team Cardin."

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

REMEMBERING CLIFF EVERTS

• Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I would like to take a moment to remember and pay tribute to a pioneer of Alaska aviation, Cliff Everts, who passed away in December at the age of 95. One of the greatest compliments you can pay to a longtime Alaskan is to refer to that individual as a pioneer. Yes, Cliff was a pioneer, but that understates the reverence with which he is held in Alaska's aviation community. He is indeed an icon of Alaska aviation.

Place yourself in a remote Alaskan village in the dead of winter. The outdoor temperature is minus 25 degrees, and the village is running short of fuel. Imagine the sound of a fuel plane landing on your village's gravel runway, delivering thousands of gallons of fuel needed to sustain daily life in the bush and power remote work sites. Deliveries such as this make life in rural Alaska possible. This is the legacy of Cliff Everts.

Originally born in New York, Cliff's passion for flying began at a young age. He took his first flight at 12 years old. As a teenager, he delivered newspapers to pay for his flying lessons. Cliff trained on a Taylorcraft, a high-winged, two-seater aircraft, and was soloing within just 6 months.

Later Cliff joined the Civilian Pilot Training Program, supporting wartime efforts during World War II. It was not long thereafter that he made the decision to leave New York, to accept a position flying as a copilot for Alaska Star Airlines in Anchorage. Alaska Star Airlines was a predecessor of today's Alaska Airlines.

Having grown to love Alaska, Everts embraced the pioneer spirit and accepted another position flying for Wien Airlines in Fairbanks. He continued to fly for Wien Airlines for 35 years, logging over 30,000 hours of flight time. His

flights carried mail, cargo, and passengers throughout the entire State.

While Cliff Everts was a pilot by trade, he was also a very savvy entrepreneur and was well known for his many business ventures, but he is best known for Everts Air Fuel. Cliff started this business in the 1980s flying a C-46. The C-46 is a World War II era high-altitude, multiengine aircraft. He quickly built the fleet, running his business on the philosophy that providing for the unique needs of Alaskans can be done both efficiently and affordably by Alaskans.

Cliff's son, Robert, began his own aviation business called Everts Air Cargo. Between Everts Air Cargo and Everts Air Fuel, the pair owned 21 airplanes. I understand that there are six C-46 aircraft remaining in revenue service. The Everts enterprises fly four of the six, and that is a testament to how well they treat their equipment. They are also known for treating their people exceptionally well.

Alaska was good to Cliff Everts. Cliff was great to Alaska. In recognition of his achievements, Cliff amassed numerous awards and recognitions. In 2007, Cliff received the Federal Aviation Administration's Master Pilot Award. In 2011, the general aviation side of Fairbanks International Airport, what we call "East Ramp," was dedicated in Cliff's honor. In 2012, the Alaska Air Carriers Association designated Cliff as an "Aviation Legend." Cliff was also inducted into the Alaska Aviation Hall of Fame. He holds the Alaska Aviation Entrepreneur Award. All appropriate recognition for a man best known for these words, "Flying has been my life, and I can't see joy in doing anything else."

On Saturday, January 13, Alaskans from all walks of life will come together in Fairbanks to celebrate the life of Cliff Everts. Cliff's friends and admirers will be joined by his wife Betty and their large family. On behalf of my Senate colleagues, let me take this opportunity to share our condolences with Betty and the family and to thank Cliff Everts for his outstanding life of service to aviation and Alaska.●

MACOMB COUNTY, MICHIGAN, BICENTENNIAL

• Mr. PETERS. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize the 200th anniversary of Macomb County, MI. Situated along Lake Saint Clair in the southeast corner of Michigan, Macomb County is built on industry and entrepreneurship and populated with dedicated citizens and entrepreneurs.

French fur trappers were the first Europeans to arrive in the area during the 17th century, and when they recognized the possibilities presented to them within the area's marshes, they sought new opportunities for trade. Moravian missionaries later established the first organized, non-native settlement in the area in 1782 as a ref-

uge for Native Americans who had converted to Christianity along the banks of the Clinton River. In March 1780, Christian Clemens purchased a distillery, which is considered the first building on the site of the future city of Mount Clemens. The next year, he bought 500 acres for development, and the site became known as High Banks. On January 15, 1818, Macomb County was formally organized as the third county in the Michigan territory and was named in honor of General Alexander Macomb, a highly decorated veteran of the War of 1812. High Banks was platted as the Village of Mount Clemens and named the county seat.

Starting in the early 1800s and continuing until 1840, settlers began moving into the interior of the county and carved out farms from the hardwood forests. Families began focusing on agriculture as the roots of county villages and towns began to be established by this time. Germans, Belgians, and other Europeans also began joining the original French and English settlers during this time. During the 1870s, mineral baths brought international fame to Mount Clemens as many thought the waters had healing powers, though interest in the spas eventually died out in the early 20th century.

Between 1920 and 1930, Macomb County saw its first population spike when it more than doubled from 38,000 to 77,000. This was caused by the establishment of Selfridge Field in 1917, now the Selfridge Air National Guard Base, and the beginning of the migration of automotive workers moving out of the city of Detroit. During the 1940s and 1950s, the suburbs again saw a population increase but the largest instance of growth occurred between 1950 and 1970, when more than 440,000 moved to Macomb County and helped make it one of Michigan's largest counties.

Today Macomb County encompasses 27 local municipalities that nearly 1 million Michiganders call home. Like our country, its people come from different backgrounds and ethnicities and share many different cultures. There are robust urban clusters, a prosperous manufacturing and economic industry throughout that is home to more than 18,000 businesses, and beautiful natural features and agricultural lands in the north. All of this has contributed to Macomb County having over 865,000 residents, making it the third most populated county in our great State.

Macomb County has been an integral part of Michigan and our great Nation for 200 years. As a fifth generation Michigander living in the southeast Michigan area, I am honored to ask my colleagues to join me in celebrating this significant milestone for one of Michigan's most important and storied counties and all those fortunate enough to call it home. I wish Macomb County continued growth and prosperity for many years to come.●